



Kay Ivey
GOVERNOR

Alabama Department of
REHABILITATION SERVICES



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YLF opens the door to new opportunities for teens with disabilities

MONTGOMERY – Youth Leadership Forum opens the door to new opportunities. The 21st annual Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) will be June 3-7 on the campus of Troy University.

The five-day event – sponsored by the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services – seeks to equip high school students with disabilities with valuable leadership skills through sessions on self-esteem, career exploration, technology, independent living, and etiquette.

YLF Coordinator Karen Jenkins said the week leads to positive changes in the participants.

"We have a lot of delegates who come to YLF, and they have never been away from home, and they have never worked," she said. "One of our main goals is to expose them to different opportunities and increase their knowledge and their skills so that they will be able to successfully transition from high school into adulthood."

Other sponsors include the Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, the Alabama Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Alabama Department of Mental Health and Troy University.

YLF delegates are chosen through a statewide search for students displaying leadership potential. Those selected represent the state's demographics in terms of

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geography, gender, ethnicity and type of disability. To be eligible, an individual must be a high school junior or senior with a disability who is between 17 and 21 years old.

On June 6, the participants will travel to Montgomery to meet Gov. Kay Ivey and other state leaders. The trip will also include a tour of the Capitol and a mentor luncheon, where delegates will interact with and get advice from successful adults with disabilities.

YLF won't be all work for the delegates. To develop their social skills, they will be attend a Montgomery Biscuits game and attend a swim party, a dance, and a talent show.

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services is the state agency whose mission is to enable Alabama's children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential.

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